

Cover Letters

are Important and Easy!

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Do I really need a cover letter? Yes, usually. Why? Because it is an opportunity to convince the employer to interview you for the job you want! What is a cover letter? It is a short letter (no more than one page) written to a specific person about a specific job that contains three parts:

First paragraph: Explain why you are writing and mention the job you want. Do not start with the sentence “I am writing about the position...” Learn something about the company that you can write about in this para-

graph or if you have been referred to the company, mention the person’s name.

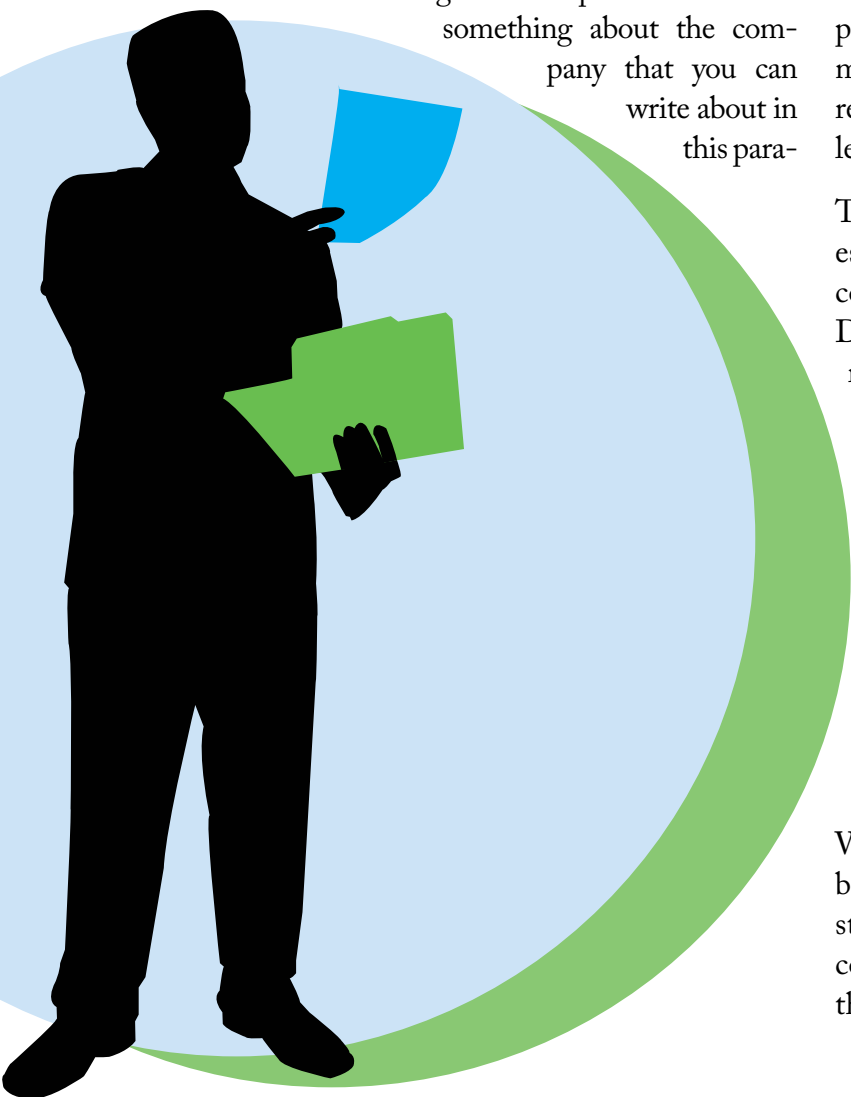
Second paragraph: Sell yourself and show off your writing skills. Write about all of the skills, knowledge and abilities you have that will benefit the company/organization. Do not write about what they can do for you. Focus on current accomplishments that are related to the current job, not the number of years you have worked or a long history of your experience. This is an opportunity to use current industry jargon and to mention your up-to-date technical skills. Don’t rewrite your resume since it will accompany this letter, but you can refer to it.

Third paragraph: Write that you are very interested in the job and would like to work for the company. Indicate what the next steps will be. Do not write, “You can contact me at...” rather, request an interview and let them know when you will contact them. Include your contact information.

Don’t include salary information. After you’ve been offered the job, negotiate for salary.

Make sure you have someone you trust edit your cover letter for content, grammar, and tone before you send it. Your cover letter should communicate your energy and ability to meet the employer’s needs. It should be perfect.

Write a new cover letter for each job opportunity because it is a great way to sell yourself, demonstrate your writing skills and knowledge of the company. An excellent cover letter can get you the interview.



This is your
opportunity to
convince the
employer to
interview you for the
job you want!

RACHEL JONES

2233 Main Street
Anytown, VA 23505
(804) 550-3342

(Date)

Mr. John Doe
Human Resource Manager
Box 8776
Anytown, NY 01223

Dear Mr. Doe:

I was very pleased to learn of the need for an Administrative Assistant in your company from your recent advertisement in the *Anytown Times*. I believe I have the qualities you are seeking:

Your needs:

Independent Self-Starter

Computer Experience

5 Years Office Experience

Good oral and written
communication skills

My Qualifications:

Developed tracking system for legislative issues; served as liaison between legislators and department personnel.

Utilized Word Perfect and Office Suite 8 in preparing reports, tables, correspondence, flyers and other documents.

Over 6 years office experience; two years experience as Office Manager.

Trained four new receptionists on answering phones professionally and handling correspondence.

I believe this background provides the skills you require for the position. I have enclosed my resume for your review. I would welcome the opportunity to interview to further discuss my qualifications and will call you at your convenience.

Yours truly,

Rachel Jones

Enclosure

From *Cover Letters That Knock 'em Dead*, by Martin Yate